

1: Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964

EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

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Conversation

[Frontispiece, facing p. iii]

[4. 1]

I

HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL
INTRODUCTION

1. VLACHS

IN continental Greece north of Corinth the observant traveller is soon aware of communities of Greek-speaking transhumant shepherds known as Sarakatsani (Σαρακατσάνοι, or Σαρακατσάναροι). In the plains it is unnecessary even to leave the main roads to see small groups of circular, domed, huts of wood and thatch, or flocks of sheep and goats guarded by shepherds dressed in rough black suits and immense goat-hair capes woven from the fleeces of their own animals. From May until the first days of November these semi-nomad shepherds graze their considerable flocks on the higher slopes of the mountains, generally 3,000-6,000 feet above sea level; during the remainder of the year they live in the coastal plains. Simple facts of climate and relief, snow on the high ground in winter, in the summer burning heat in the plains, encourage this transhumance in a geographical area physically dominated by the ranges of the Pindus massif and the southern extremity of the Rhodope mountains. Epirus, Thessaly, Macedonia, and Thrace are the provinces in which they are most numerous but communities are found further south in continental Greece and some groups are established in the north of the Peloponnese and Euboea. In the whole of Greece their number, perhaps, approaches eighty thousand,¹ a population which was possibly absolutely greater a hundred years ago, but was certainly relatively more considerable as a fraction of the total inhabitants of the area.

The Greek villagers generally refer to the Sarakatsani simply as Vlachs (βλάχοι), that is shepherds who, in step with the rhythm of the seasons, lead their animals alternately down to the plains and up to the mountains. The occupational reference of the word, Vlach² is an old one, already in use during the Byzantine period.

¹ Mme Chatzimichalis arrives at a total of 81,473. 'Αγροτική Χαρτογραφία, Athens, 1957, vol. i, Part A, p. v3.

² See e.g. Anna Comnena, Ed. Bonn., i, p. 395. One of a number of references quoted by Mme Chatzimichalis, op. cit., vol. i, Part A, p. v3.

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[113]

OF SHEEP AND SHEPHERDS

233 quality of any tract of grazing land is seldom homogeneous. In
 [234] these circumstances the best grass must be reserved for the
 pregnant ewes to strengthen them before lambing, and after-
 wards to maintain their milk yield at the highest possible level.

[432] For the prosperity of the stani depends on the crop of lambs and
 the amount of milk that is sold to the cheese merchant.

474 The physical plan of a stani in winter varies in detail with the
 361 character of the grazing but certain features are almost always
 233 present. The huts of the stani, the group of co-operating families,
 are established on or close to the best grassland, on flat ground,
 sheltered from the prevailing wind, and as near as possible to
 water, although in practice a spring or well may be a mile
 away and sometimes farther. The huts are generally close to-
 gether but in no regular pattern; although if brothers, as is
 generally the case, form the nucleus of the group, they build
 their homes next to one another with the huts of cousins and
 other relatives on the periphery. The size of the winter stani
 varies. It is restricted, as I have suggested in the previous
 chapter, by the difficulties of finding enough winter grazing
 land. But a lower limit is also drawn by the minimum require-
 ment of four active adult shepherds and a young goatherd, a
 working force that makes it barely possible to work the scheme
 of shepherding that has been described.

233 In November, when the sheep arrive from the mountains, the
 pregnant ewes are not allowed to pasture indiscriminately on
 the better grasslands (γαλαροτόπι) reserved for their use after
 lambing. Until Christmas, when the lambing period begins, they
 graze only on the rougher and higher sections of this grassland

[417] perhaps a mile, or more, from the huts. In this area the women
 help the shepherds to build a circular sheep-fold (γρέκι) con-
 structed from bundles of brushwood tied to one another and
 sometimes secured to posts. In this the ewes sleep and find some
 [462] relief from the cold and the driving rain. Outside the women
 [392] erect a small refuge of branches and thatch (γαλατζούχα) for the
 two shepherds who guard them.

233 In the early days of December the women tie together
 417 branches to make wooden frames, 5 ft. 6 in. in height and 4 ft.
 wide (λασές), on which they interlace other more pliable
 branches and bind bundles of reeds, grass, or ferns. With these
 portable frames the shepherds and their women set up another

THE FLOCKS

21

circular sheep-fold on level well-drained land close to the huts. Each frame leans towards the centre at an angle of 60° to the ground and is supported by a forked branch. In the lee of this inclined wall the animals press together for warmth and protection. During the last days of December and the first ten days of the New Year most of the lambs are born. As each ewe drops its lamb, the two animals are brought down from the pen on the rough pasture at dawn and dusk by relays of unmarried girls, and are placed in the new sheep-fold close to the huts. By the middle of January the whole flock of ewes with their lambs is together once more. Once the lambs are born the yield of milk becomes the main concern. The ewes are now grazed intensively on the best grassland which is divided into plots or strips (ἀπολωρίδες) used in daily rotation. Under present conditions, however, few stanis possess enough winter grassland, and for some weeks before lambing and until the move to the mountains in the spring, the milking ewes are also fed each morning with weighed quantities of maize, oats, or cotton-cake.

On the first of February the cheese merchant sets up his station (ματταριό) close to the grassland of the largest stani in the neighbourhood. In return for this convenience the women of this stani build two thatched huts; in one the cheese-maker and his assistant sleep, work, and keep their equipment, cauldrons, churns, and the cream separator; the other, which is entered only through a low trap-door from the first hut, and is sunk three feet below the surface of the ground, is used for the storage of the cheeses³ on beds of fern leaves under the necessary conditions of stillness and humidity. The women must also supply the cheese-maker with water and firewood.

Cash and credit at this time of year are very short for the Sarakatsani and there is now a great urgency to sell milk. Every effort is made to wean the male lambs quickly. The ewes are seldom allowed to suckle these lambs for longer than four weeks before they are sold to an animal dealer for the spring lamb market; a few only are kept back to maintain the right proportion of rams to ewes in the flock. This sale of lambs brings

³ Cheese merchants separate some of the cream to make butter. From the separated milk they make a hard cheese known as καπαλοτύρι; and, then, from the remaining liquid a form of cheese known as μυζήθρα.

22 OF SHEEP AND SHEPHERDS

233 This sale of lambs brings
 234 in an immediate sum of money, and if the quantity of milk then
 432 released is an encouraging amount the merchant may be per-
 434 suaded to make another advance of credit. Before the first of
 [452] February the shepherds will have prepared the milking pen
 (σπολύρα) as close as possible to the cheese-maker's station.
 [417] The pen is a circular or elliptical enclosure of stones or brush-
 wood with a wide opening, or 'mouth', at one end through
 which the sheep are driven in, and a narrow opening, or 'eye',
 at the other end through which the sheep are taken in turn to
 be milked by the shepherds who sit on flat stones on either side
 of this narrow passage. At first in the early days of February only
 a little milk is taken, for the ewes are still with their lambs. But
 the amount steadily increases after the sale of the male lambs.
 However, none of the ewe lambs is sold unless the family is in
 great difficulty. And anxious as the Sarakatsani are to sell all
 their milk they will not endanger their development by weaning
 them too quickly; for the future of the flock depends upon the
 condition of these animals, which in two years' time produce
 their first lambs. The ewes are allowed to suckle them for seven
 or eight weeks and it is not until early March that they are
 finally weaned or 'cut', and that the flow of milk to the cheese-
 maker becomes considerable.

233 The three other flocks of the stani divide the remaining
 grazing according to their needs. The best of this is allotted to
 the young 'zigouria', the lambs of the previous season. The flock
 of rams, with the ewes which remained sterile after the summer
 mating, go to the highest and roughest grazing since they are
 strong and resistant to cold, and this is generally the most
 [417] distant flock of sheep from the huts. In both cases a sheep-fold
 [342] of brushwood, and refuges of branches and thatch for the shep-
 herds, are built to protect animals and men from the winter
 storms and rain.

The goats guarded by one or two young and nimble goat-
 herds feed on whatever is unsuitable or inaccessible to the sheep,
 especially the leaves of scrub-oak and other trees and bushes.
 Since goats seldom represent more than 20 per cent of the total
 stock of Sarakatsani families from Zagori no attempt is made to
 form more than one flock. At the end of November after they
 [462] have repaired or remade the family huts the women begin to
 [417] build the elaborate goat-pen with latticed sides at least six feet

THE WOMEN

A man may occasionally give his wife a kid 33 432
to sell but otherwise chickens and eggs are her only source of 434
cash income.

The huts which protect the Sarakatsani from the weather and 342 ●
the curiosity of other families, are of two principal kinds, circu- 462
lar and domed (κυρλωτά), or rectangular and 'arched' (ἀψιδωτά).
Except that in the case of rectangular huts the men help the
women to erect the posts and crossbeams the building of the
hut is entirely the work of women. They cut, select, and tie into
position the pliable but strong branches which form the frame-
work of the circular hut. They collect, dress, and tie on to the
wooden skeleton the bundles of reeds, grasses, or ferns with
which the hut is thatched. They level the floor inside and plas- 237
ter both the floor and the walls to a height of three feet with a
mixture of mud and mule-dung. They form the central hearth.
Five or six women working continuously are able to erect a hut 467
of conventional size* in two to three days, although it will have 478
taken them at least as many days to find and prepare their
materials.

The treatment of the wool from which the Sarakatsani make 236
the greater part of their clothing and all their blankets is also 462
naturally, in the hands of the women. The wool is divided into
three categories according to the fineness and length of the
staple. It is washed in hot water and beaten with a wooden
implement to free it from surplus grease. After the wool has 283
been dried in the sun and disentangled with a carding tool 236
(λανάρι) it is spun by hand from a distaff (ρόκα). This is a
lengthy process and when a woman's hands are not otherwise
employed she is either spinning or knitting. Finally, the spun 286
thread is woven into cloth on the simple wooden loom which the 227
women operate continuously during the months of August and
September when the flocks and the shepherds make fewer
demands on their energies. On the loom are made the blankets,
the shepherd's capes woven from a mixture of wool and goats'
hair, and the cloth for jackets, skirts, and trousers. Today pro- 294
fessional village or town tailors cut and sew the suits of the men,
but the cloth remains their own. Only shoes, shirts, and cotton 291
material (for the young girls' dresses at the summer festivals) are 432
bought from the shops of Jannina and other towns.

* A circular hut for a family of 6 or 7 adults generally has a diameter of
14 or 15 feet. Height and diameter are approximately the same.

THE EXTENDED FAMILY

585 gives his wife some peremptory order. The husband's obligations and affections are still entirely contained within his own family of origin. Indeed his behaviour reflects an almost compulsive assertion that 'this is how it will always be'. Clearly if this fiction is to be maintained for even a short space of time, the husband must not display any affective interest in his bride, since this would inevitably disturb the equilibrium in the old pattern of his relations with his siblings and his parents. Therefore in his general behaviour the husband attempts to deny the importance of his exclusive sexual relationship with his bride and he makes every effort to conceal the occurrence and frequency of sexual intercourse. However, since all the members of a family sleep together in the same hut, this is not easy.

585 Before the marriage ceremony a temporary hut is built for the bridal pair, or sometimes a space is cleared in the hut which is otherwise used as a store-shed. Customarily the bridegroom does not go with the sheep for eight days from the Sunday of his marriage and he is thus able to sleep in privacy with his bride for six nights. Although this initial privacy is granted to him, the whole progress of these marital events is shared by the groom with his brothers; some of this information also leaks through to the female members of the family. In this first sexual communion the entire family identifies itself with the young husband. There is no question at this stage of his having any affection for his bride. This may emerge later partly as a result of the intimacies now initiated. It is something of an ordeal and a matter of considerable anxiety for all Sarakatsan bridegrooms that they should be able to effect a technically successful assault upon this strange woman and uphold their reputation for manliness in its most literal sense, a reputation which affects the prestige of the entire family. The stress on physical and moral manliness (*ἀνδρισμός*) in the stereotype of the ideal man encourages in the Sarakatsani a deep-seated fear of sexual impotence on this critical occasion which is, indeed, almost a public ceremony of initiation. In the morning, success or failure on the previous night is discussed with brothers in embarrassed monosyllables and, if there has been difficulty, they try to give advice and encouragement. Any lack of sexual prowess almost inevitably reaches the ears of the bride's family and the possibility of a leakage farther afield cannot be overlooked.

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4. Stani in Winter

[Facing p. 208]

484
291 pompon covering the front of the foot. The thick
soles were clouted, and the nails grated underfoot.
101 Gazing straight ahead, he loped along the middle
[233] of the road, as though to keep as far as possible
[413] from the contaminating houses. A long shepherd's
[402] staff, whose crook was a tortuously carved wooden
snake, was laid across his shoulders. His arms were
looped over it in the cruciform position in which
many mountaineers carry their crooks and their
guns. He was a Sarakatsán. Heads turned as he
passed, and the smack of cards and the clatter of
backgammon counters died down for a few mo-
ments. I got up and dogged his steps at a discreet
distance.

[114] Sarakatsáns have always filled me with awe. I
first saw these primeval Greek nomads years ago
when I was walking across Bulgaria, on my way
to Constantinople. A gathering of beehive-shaped
• [342] huts were scattered over the wintry hills slanting
[131] to the Black Sea. Brushwood folds ran up the
233 green slopes, and thousands of shaggy black goats
and sheep grazed over the rainy landscape, their
heavy bronze bells filling the air with a many-
toned and harmonious jangle. Here and there
among them, like dark monoliths under the wheel-
[29] ing crows, their herdsmen leaned on their lance-
long crooks; their faces were almost lost in the deep
hoods of high-shouldered goat's-hair capes that

233 reached to the ground, capes of so coarse a weave
 291 and so stiff with rain that they looked as though
 their incumbents could almost step forth and
 leave them standing like sentry boxes. I next saw
 101 them in March the following year, when I was
 114 riding across Greek Macedonia and stayed a night
 122 in one of their smoky wigwams. Since then I had
 131 seen them again and again, all over northern
 124 Greece, in the plains in winter and in the moun-
 tains in summer, but always on the skyline or in
 the middle distance. True nomads, these self-
 appointed Ishmaels hover on the outskirts of or-
 dinary Greek life as fleetingly as a mirage, only
 manifesting themselves to ordinary mortals in far-
 away glimpses. Suddenly, at a ravine's twist far
 from the scorched lowlands, one comes across
 133 their impermanent hamlets of conical huts on
 361 high ledges of the Pindus and the Rhodope moun-
 221 tains and in the sierras of Roumeli; and in winter,
 242 gazing down from the snows that have banished
 them, one can discern their clustering huts in
 the plains, the ascending smoke, and the slowly
 grazing flocks.

221 Every spring their beasts and their long caravans
 361 of horses, laden with all they possess, can be
 492 seen winding up into the thawed mountains, or
 halted around a sudden village of somber tents,
 to stream downhill again later to the withered
 autumnal plains which the rains will soon turn
 242 green. One discovers them binding lopped
 branches and osier twigs into the hemispherical
 skeletons of the huts which will house them for the
 season; shelters whose blackened and molting
 thatch will later mark where they have settled for
 a few months and vanished from again. Some-
 times a far-off barking and the murmur of bells
 hint at their presence deep in the ilex woods or
 along a dazzling canyon where nothing stirs ex-
 cept, perhaps, a pair of floating eagles. Besides
 167 these rare apparitions, this fugitive community of
 1233 about eighty thousand souls and of flocks amount-
 ing to several million head seems to have the gift
 of invisibility.

361 U
 221 NLIKE the seminomads of Greece — the Kout-
 233 zovlachs and the Karagounia, who all have moun-
 101 tain villages from which to migrate and to which
 they return after their half-yearly journeys in
 search of winter pasture — the Sarakatsani have
 nothing more solid than their abodes of wicker
 and rush. All of them, however, look to some
 range of mountains, some fold or cordillera where
 they have grazed their flocks for centuries of sum-
 mers, as their home. Their lowland pastures are
 more variable, an uncertain sojourn with few
 claims on their allegiance. At the turn of the cen-
 tury the Sarakatsani of northern Greece were the

[p. 74-A]

G
 497 had pocketed our tickets, we watched him work
 his perilous way along the duckboard of the cor-
 ridorless train like a cat burglar. A large open
 cattle car was hitched to the rear of the train. A
 sound of raucous singing was carried along the
 line, and a blue flag whirled overhead on a long
 pole. The conductor, settling in our carriage for
 a chat on his return journey, confirmed what we
 had surmised. "Yes, it's a Sarakatsán bride-
 groom on his way to a wedding up at Sikarayia.
 They've been drinking for days." When we pulled
 up at the next wayside halt, the whole party
 leaped, shouting and singing, to the platform, the
 banner aswirl, and bore down on a small group
 waiting under an acacia tree. The white-clad
 groom and his cronies returned a few moments
 later, carrying the bride, who was attired in a
 stiff black and white costume of angular and Aztec
 strangeness, by her elbows. She sailed along the
 platform with the passivity of a sacred image
 being transported from shrine to shrine. As the
 shaft of the standard-bearer's banner careered
 past, I saw that it was topped by a pomegranate,
 and the same fertility symbol was affixed to the
 top and the two arms of a beribboned wooden
 cross. When they were all aboard, the groom's
 party fired their guns into the sky, and singing
 and intermittent firing accompanied the rest of
 the journey.

G
 186 "Paraxenoi anthropoi," vouchsafed the conductor,
 after clicking his tongue censoriously a dozen
 times. "Odd people —" They did seem a con-
 trast to the lofty Victorian stateliness of our car-
 riage. He told us that the groom was the son of a
 great tselingas — the head of a clan, as it were, of
 Sarakatsán shepherds — in fact, an architselingas,
 called Kosta Zogas, who wintered at Sikarayia
 and pastured his sheep in the Rhodope Moun-
 tains in summer, not far from the flocks of the
 bride's father, another architselingas, called Vrysas,
 who wintered near Souphli, along the banks of
 the Hebrus. "You'd think," he went on, "when
 you see them in their rush hovels and their old
 capes, that they were poor. Not a bit of it!
 They've got pots of money. Literally pots. They
 fill up pitchers with gold sovereigns, and bury
 them — no one knows how many — whole for-
 tunes in the ground."

S
 342 SIKARAYIA turned out to be a village of beauti-
 fully thatched Sarakatsán huts. Giant beehives
 swelled and tapered in tiers of cropped reed which
 overlapped with the precision of the plating on
 armadilloes' backs, and all of them were topped
 by wooden crosses near holes in the thatch through
 which thin blue smoke curled. Black-clad Sara-

2.Ferris T-3,4 (no date) 1962

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● 342



[p.87-c]

/31 cont./

352 Small stools: This type of furniture has made its appearance recently

Fig. 5



among the Sarakatsani, in imitation of peasant furniture. In any case it is a very simple stool (fig. 5).

[516] The generally accepted custom is that everybody squats or stretches out on the ground in front of the hearth on covers spread directly on the ground of the hut. Beds are unknown.

● [342] In other respects the interior of the hut itself solves the problem of the indispensable /32/ furniture to hold objects. The walls, in fact, provide a kind of bench or shelf. (6)

6. See below, the section devoted to the dwelling,
pp. 90-92.

415 Since furniture is limited to these few objects, we shall go onto
[128] examine the utensils made by the Sarakatsani, which we shall categorize according to their use.

Utensils used in making bread

[322] The kneading trough, a type of large receptacle carved out of a
[824] heavy piece of solid wood (trunk of holly) in which bread is kneaded (fig. 6).

The pinakotti: this is a very thick board that has six to eight

/58 cont./

The use of hides.

281 This craft is limited to the fabrication of goat skin bottles.
415 (fig. 43).

The treatment of the skins consists first of removing their wool, which is crudely cut with scissors, then drying them. For



Fig. 43

drying, the skins are turned so that the wool surface is on the inside; then a flexible, curved stalk is inserted in order to keep the skin well stretched.

When the skins are dry, one ties the opening of the feet carefully and overcasts the fore part (belly). The goatskin bottles are then ready to receive liquids or cheeses for transportation or preservation; these are poured into the opening corresponding to the neck.

SARAKATSANI BUILDINGS.

342 All the Sarakatsani buildings used for dwellings or for animal
343 shelters are made of wood.
824

Small trunks, branches, twigs, and leaves of trees (plane trees, oaks, beeches, firs, poplars, willows, pines, bushes with or without thorns, finally aquatic plants such as rushes or reeds) are extensively used.

The choice of these plant species is related on the one hand, to the possibilities offered by the flora in the region where the Sarakatsani live and, on the other hand, to the type of building undertaken.

/58 cont./

342 Metal is never used as a building material, not even in the form
343 of nails. The same holds true for stones or bricks. However, clayey
earth is sometimes used.

To the problems of the dwelling, its outbuildings and shelters
for the animals, the Sarakatsani has a single solution, always /59/
the same: the hut. For all the Sarakatsani building derive from
the method of erecting a hut.

The dwelling and outbuildings.

342 The Sarakatsani are acquainted with two main categories of
dwelling huts:

The round or circular huts surmounted by an almost conical
cupola which, from a distance, makes them resemble wicker hives (fig.
45).

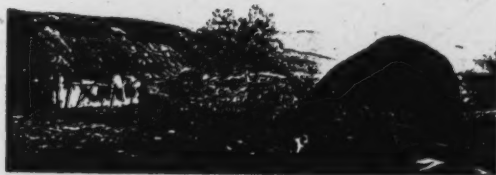


Fig. 44

The rectangular or "sloping" huts, (15) the base of which forms
a rectangle (figs. 48-49).

15. According to the terminology of the Sarakatsani.

They are called sloping in comparison with the
circular huts which are also called "upright."

These categories include numerous variations, of which we shall
speak after having described the fundamental types. Figure 44 shows
these two types of huts.

/59 cont./

342 The round hut

Seen from the outside, it gives the impression of a solid created by a parabola around a perpendicular axis whose tangent is at the top of the hut (fig. 45).

From the ground to a height of 1.60 meters its diameter is about six meters. From this height upward the diameter starts to diminish progressively but rapidly, ending, at a /60/ height of approximately five meters, in a geometric point which forms the top of the hut. They /the huts/ therefore proceed "imperceptibly from the ground to the summit, they have neither walls nor roof properly speaking, but a conical surface." (16)

16. According to the typology of huts established by A. Leroi-Gourhan: Milieu et Techniques, p. 261, which corresponds perfectly to this type of Sarakatsani hut.

The entire construction rests on a framework composed of vertical elements and intersecting horizontal elements.



Fig. 45

/60 cont./

342

335

The vertical part is built of strong posts approximately 1.30 meters high, which are driven into the ground and thus constitute the foundations of the hut. That is why the posts must be planted at regular intervals (about 60 centimeters) on the circumference of the base, marked off beforehand on the ground.

The fundamental framework completed, one proceeds to the construction of the top, called "crown" which acts as the "keystone" assuring the balance and solidity of the entire building. /61/ It consists of a ring 50 centimeters in diameter, made up preferably of wicker stalks, slender, strong and flexible, that are twisted together.

Next, long, defoliated branches, one end of which is notched, are fastened to the crown which thus rests in the groove formed by the totality of the notches (fig. 46).

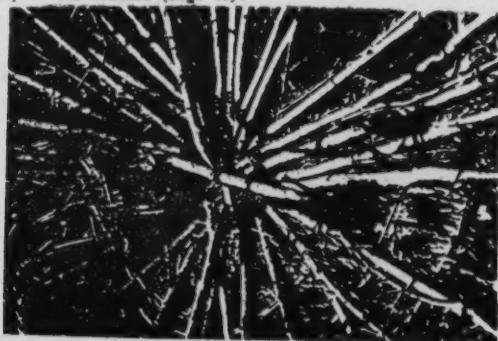


Fig. 46

Care is taken that the length of these branches, when they are attached to the posts previously mentioned, corresponds to the height that one wishes to give the hut.

If the length of these branches is insufficient, several of them are fastened end to end until the desired length is obtained.

/61 cont./

342 When the construction of the branch-crown combination (the frame-
335 work of the roof and part of the vertical framework) is finished, it
is set in place. The crown is mounted on a long fork of wood and
raised so that the fork, set vertically, rests on the ground in the
center of the hut where it is firmly secured. After that, the free
ends of the /62/ branches are fastened to the upper ends of the posts,
the number of the first corresponding to that of the second.

However, the framework is not yet finished, for it requires
horizontal elements.

Perpendicularly to the posts and parallel to the ground one
arranges long, preferably slender, branches which one attaches with

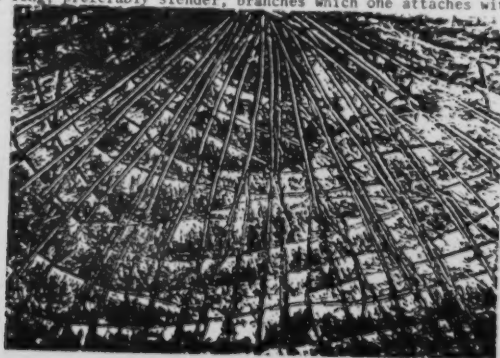


Fig. 47

plant cords to the vertical elements around which they turn. Actually,
they are large circles which are placed over the vertical structure
at intervals of approximately 30 to 40 centimeters (fig. 47) between
the base and the summit.

342 The construction of the hut is completed with the construction
of the covering, which may be divided into two phases.

/62 cont./

342 The first /phase/ consists of filling in the checker work formed
824 by the intersection of the vertical and horizontal elements of the
framework by spreading on them branches, foliage, even bushes in a
thin and sparse layer that is kept in place by plant cords.

The second /phase/ consists of covering this first layer with
bushes (holly, etc.) or with small branches of fir, /63/ plane tree,
etc., previously tied into bunches, they are placed vertically side
by side all around the hut, beginning at the ground, and only to the
height of the posts. From there to the top one proceeds in similar
fashion but using aquatic plants (reeds, rushes, etc.).

It should be added that these bunches of aquatic plants, meant
to insure the impermeability of the hut, are spread out in circular
layers arranged in such a way that the lower side of each layer
slightly covers the upper side of the one placed directly below it.
This arrangement, which forms very distinct areas overlapping from
top to bottom, in a succession of real tiers, promotes the running-
off of rain water.

342 Finally, the construction described is supported by horizontal
lacings--concentric rings wound around the exterior surface of the hut--
which hold in place the covering and increase the stability of the
construction, especially against the wind.

It sometimes happens, especially in the case of huts used for
winter living in cold regions, that a second roof is added. That is
(824) to say, a hood the size of the hut, made of bunches of rushes super-
imposed on one another, entirely prepared beforehand on the ground,
is set in place by means of forks.

In order to complete the description, it is necessary to add that
in the course of the construction an opening is left to permit entrance
into the hut.

A closing, in the form of a dry hedge or of boards, acts as a door;
a firm post is used as an upright.

/63 cont./

The rectangular hut, called "sloping"

342

This is a rectangular hut also called "house-hut" by the Sarakatsani because it looks like a village cottage but is entirely built of branches (fig. 48 and 49).

The materials used for this construction are the same as those that go into the construction of the round hut.

[335]

This building, obviously more complicated than the preceding one, for it includes vertical walls and a roof with two sides, rests on forks made of trunks or long branches of fir, plane tree, etc., specially selected and slightly shaped.

/64/ The dimensions of its rectangular base are on an average eight meters long by four meters wide, but they may vary according to the number of inhabitants.

342

335

After having traced on the ground the outlines of the plan, that is to say, a rectangle of the desired dimensions, one sets in the center of each of the two sides representing the width of the rectangle a fork approximately three meters high; then four forks 1.60 meters high are set successively at the four angles of this rectangle.

According to the length of the projected hut, one drives into the ground one, two and sometimes three additional forks of the same height along each of the big sides of the rectangle. Thus we have a total of eight, ten or twelve forks which constitute the foundations of the hut. Then the framework proper is erected (fig. 49).

On the two high center forks is placed a trunk which serves as ridge pole, while from one fork to the other one places a series of trunks, one after the other, in such a way that, by joining their upper ends, one obtains a tie-beam forming a rectangle parallel to that which was traced on the ground. Then, two small trunks or branches are placed obliquely on either side of the center fork which they join to the forks at angles, similar to rafters forming two gables. All these trunks and all these branches are fastened to each other or

/64 cont./

342 to the forks by plant cords or ropes.
335

Finally, the top of the hut, which ultimately takes the shape of a roof with two places slanting from the ridge is built parallel to the main rafters. It is made up of a series of long branches that serve as rafters, their number determined by that of another series of long posts set vertically in the ground. Actually, one plants on each of the long sides, at intervals of 40 to 50 centimeters, a certain number of posts 1.60 meters high ending in a fork. Now, to each of these posts which reach the height of the tie-beam there corresponds a rafter to which it is lashed in the manner we have already described.

It should be said here that the ends of the rafters sharply project beyond the tie-beams to form an overhang protecting the hut from rainwater.

For the construction of the low sides of the rectangle one also uses posts planted sometimes vertically, sometimes at an angle /65/ / Figs. 48 and 49 appear here/ /66/ so that, in the latter case, they delineate an arc at the base, the span of which represents the width of the hut and the height of which (approximately 50 centimeters) inclines outward from the center fork.

342 As a consequence, the two short sides of the hut are either rectilinear or parabolic at their base; it follows that the corresponding walls are flat in the first instance and convex in the second.

Finally, the covering of this framework remains to be described.

[824] Horizontal stalks are lashed to the vertical components at intervals

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 77]

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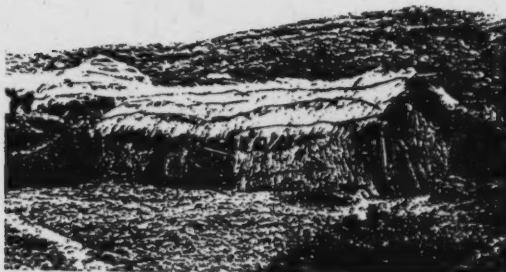


Fig. 48

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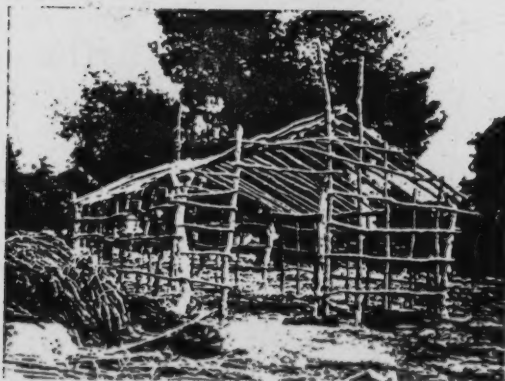


Fig. 49

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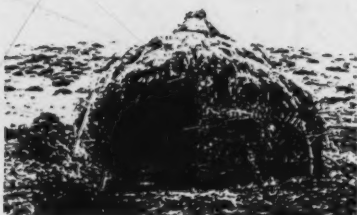


Fig. 50

342 of 30 centimeters, while on the roof long stalks are attached parallel
824 to the tie-beams. With bunches of branches and leaves, and proceeding
in the manner described for the round hut, that is to say in tiers,
one covers the walls and the roof. In addition, bunches of aquatic
plants are spread on the latter.

It often happens that the walls themselves are finished off with
a layer of these aquatic materials.

342 While the construction of the round hut provides a single opening
354 that serves as entrance, that of the rectangular hut also provides
a window, sometimes even two. Depending on the size of the hut, the
opening, 1.30 centimeters high by 80 centimeters wide, is situated /67/
either on the width (in the case of large huts) or on the length (in
that of small ones), while the windows are situated either on the side
opposite or the side contiguous to that of the door.

However, in most cases what we call "windows" are only narrow
openings cut into the two small sides of the hut, particularly at the
point where the large center forks join the ridge pole. Usually, the

/67 cont./

342



Fig. 51

[354] walls on these sides stop several centimeters below at this point, thus leaving an opening approximately 60 centimeters wide that is never closed (fig. 52).

The door proper is the same type as that of the round hut.

Variations of the two kinds of huts described (fig. 50 and 51):

Variations of the round hut: the diameter of these huts does not exceed 2.50 meters and in general they are from 1.80 to 2.20 meters high.

Their construction is really very simple.

/68/ Long stems, starting from the ground on a circumference marked out in advance, join at the ridge thus forming the vertical part of the frame, the general appearance of which reminds us of a wicker beehive.

Horizontal lacings attached to the vertical components spaced at intervals from the ground to the top, in the manner previously described. An opening permitting entry is always provided; it is closed by a door made either of branches, boards or a cloth.

/68 cont./

342 Of course, the whole /hut/ is covered with branches, leaves or
(824) bushes. Sometimes the part of the hut forming the top is covered with aquatic plants, as in the preceding cases.

As far as the use of these huts is concerned, it should be mentioned that the largest ones may be used for living quarters as well as temporary occupancy particularly for shepherds roaming far from the encampment.

343 The smaller ones serve as outbuildings of the principal dwelling, either as storerooms, sheds, or small storehouses for blankets and provisions (grain, flour, oil), or as a shelter for the loom (fig. 50, 51).

342

(354)



Fig. 50

/69/ /figs. 53 and 54 appear here/

/70/ Variations of the rectangular hut: the variant of the rectangular hut is relatively of a simpler construction than that of the large rectangular hut itself. But here it is necessary to make a distinction.

These variants built either with forks or without forks.

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[335]

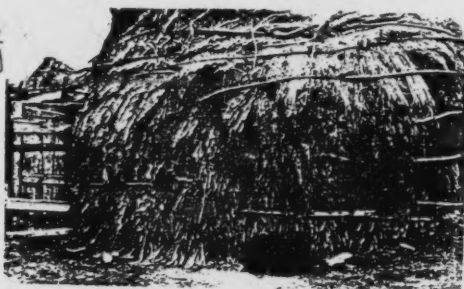


Fig. 53

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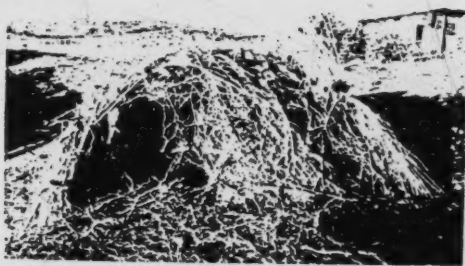


Fig. 54

/70 cont./

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For the first /variation/ the basic materials consist of:

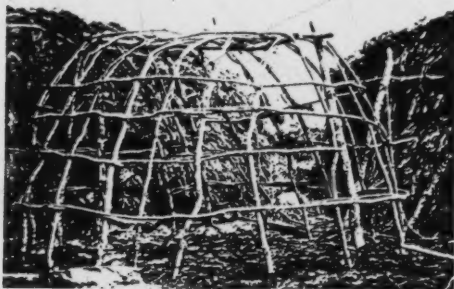


Fig. 55

a) Only two forks set in the middle of the short sides of the rectangle drawn on the ground, that is to say, opposite each other.

b) A trunk resting horizontally on these forks.

These forks are approximately two meters high, whereas the horizontal trunk is from two to three meters long.

Long branches are then driven into the ground on the two large sides of the rectangle at intervals of 30 to 40 centimeters; their height exceeds that of the forks. Their upper ends are tied to the horizontal trunk that constitutes the ridge pole: they thus form true crossed arches (fig. 53 and 55).

/71/ The side walls of these huts are always convex in shape.

342 Of course, the method used in the construction of the frame as well as the covering, scarcely differs from that of the buildings already described.

343 The second /variation/, that is to say the sloping huts built

/71 cont./

343 without forks, are even more simple. In general, their shape is no longer rectangular. Their base is more of an ellipse, the large axis



Fig. 54

of which is of variable length, according to circumstances. On the outline of this ellipse, always drawn on the ground in advance, the Sarakatsani plant long branches spaced 30 to 40 centimeters apart; the free end of each of these branches is lashed to that of the branch opposite it, so as to form a high arch from 1.50 to 1.80 meters. Basically, what is involved is a vaulted framework (fig. 54, 56).

An opening in these huts, which must serve as entrance door, is always provided for at one of the two ends of the big axis.

From the technical point of view there is no difference to be noted in the process of construction.

342 With respect to the use to which these two variations of the hut
343 are put, it is necessary to say, in anticipation of our analyses concerning utilization, that those which are based on forks are always intended for living quarters.

The others serve:

--as sheds or storerooms,

--to shelter looms,

/72/--as stable for the chief's horse,

/72 cont./

- 342
343
- as stable for the mules,
 - as a place to milk the ewes,
 - as a shelter for the shepherds.

"The shape of these latter huts justifies our saying that the Sarakatsani are in fact acquainted with but a single hut: the round hut which can be elongated," Madame Hadjimichali maintains, in substance. (17)

17. Ibid., A. II, p. 175.

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As a matter of fact, this statement which raises a question of a technological order seems at first acceptable. Does not the elongated shape of the round hut constitute a stage in the direction of the rectangular hut which is to all appearances only a further improvement on that form? And if one replies in the affirmative, would not this reply be corroborated by the fact that the civilization of the Sarakatsani insofar as it is a rural and very traditional civilization, must present a certain uniformity in its technical expression?

Now, it seems to us that appearances are not sufficiently convincing for us to agree with this opinion. For, there is such a difference between the technical conceptions underlying the hut with a vaulted framework and the rectangular hut with a framework of forks, that the idea maintained above no longer holds.

[177]
[340]

The improvement of what already exists, from the same components is one thing; but a transformation, a complete change of the process of construction, hence a total change of conception (replacing arches with regular walls and a roof) presupposes invention of technological borrowing, if not acculturation.

Between the elongated round hut and the rectangular hut the distance is such that no continuity can be established. In any case, the issue remains open, pending additional information.

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The outbuildings of the Sarakatsani dwelling

In addition to the variations we have described and which serve

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Fig. 57

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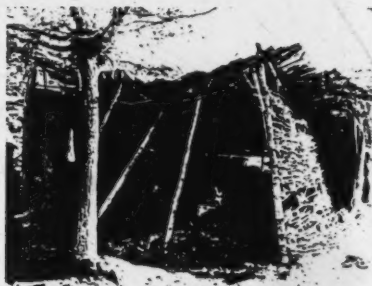


Fig. 58

/74 cont./

- 342 At one of these openings it leans against the front of the hut,
417 specifically on either side of the door; the other /opening/, left free, serves as entrance (fig. 57).

417 In short, it is an elliptical, fenced-in courtyard, the opening of which, situated opposite the entrance of the hut, it closed by a gate made either of boards of interlaced branches.

/75/ The dimensions of this construction are 2.50 to 5.50 meters for the large axis and two to four meters for the small one.

- [343] The "frétzato" may enclose one, two, and sometimes three round or rectangular huts placed side by side (in this case, of course, its dimensions are considerably larger); then it serves sometimes as an outdoor kitchen, sometimes as a receiving area. For the latter purpose it includes the tsardhaki (see below).

343 The second type of this construction is the "independent
417 frétzato," that is to say, one that does not lean against the hut. This type occurs on the one hand in a circular form called photoghoi, and, on the other, a rectangular form given the name tsardhaki or "shade" (fig. 58 and 59).

In the first form it is a kind of dry hedge, almost round in shape, approximately three to four meters in diameter, that is provided with a single opening without a gate and serves as outdoor kitchen as well as a place for storing utensils; in the second form it is a shelter against sun and heat, placed near the hut. It must therefore necessarily face the north in order to have the benefit on the cool winds (etesian winds).

This latter construction, is more interesting than the preceding one; its dimensions are approximately two meters by five meters, and the sloping roof reaches a height of 2.50 to three meters.

In order to give an idea of the "tsardhaki," let us say that it is a rectangular half-hut on several forks, for its roof has but a single side. Actually, forks 2.50 meters high are set at the two

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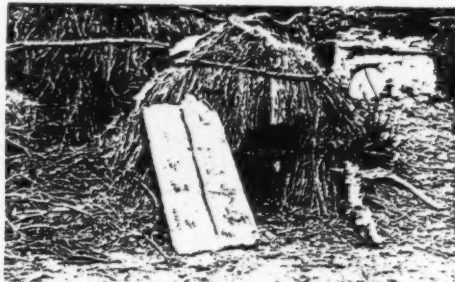


Fig. 61

342 Interior arrangement of the dwelling and its outbuildings:

In general, the interior of the large huts intended for dwellings (both round and rectangular) is arranged in the following manner:

On the earth of the hut, carefully leveled out beforehand, one applies a bed of mud mixed with straw or dung, which will form a solid crust. This work is done entirely by hand. All around the hut and along the walls one builds, with a mixture of earth and pebbles, a low wall 30 centimeters high and about 40 to 60 centimeters thick, which one then coats with the mixture of mud and straw of which we have already spoken (fig. 62).

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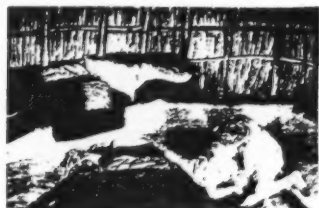


Fig. 62

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This low wall serves to ward off any danger of flooding by rainwater. In this connection it is necessary to mention that the Sarakatsani never forget to scoop out a drainage ditch all around the hut.

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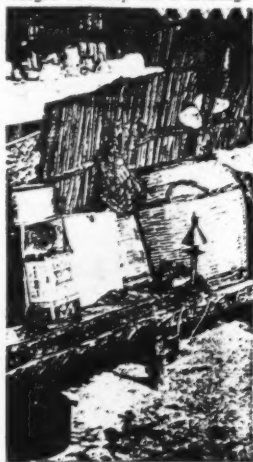


Fig. 63

/80 cont./

354 high and approximately 20 centimeters thick, meant to protect the hearth against drafts and to facilitate the process of cooking of which we shall speak farther on (fig. 64).

Any kind of chimney is unknown.

342 Moreover, there are no divisions inside a Sarakatsani dwelling.

352 At the left of the entrance and 1.50 meters from the ground one sees two /81/ shelves of wood, one above the other. With very rare

(342) exceptions these shelves are typically placed to the left of the entrance since, in most cases, the door opens inward; thus it is only in the opposite case that they are placed on the right. (fig. 65)

352
291



Fig. 65

/95 cont./

233
(432) sold to livestock dealers. The sterile ewes are also sold.

With she-goats and kids the procedure is the same.

(232) Moreover, castration of a small number of male animals intended for consumption is also practiced.

/96/ METHODS OF UTILIZATION AND CONSUMPTION

121 Some goods obtained are at times directly usable or consumable without the necessity of supplementary intervention. There are others which must first be submitted either to preparation, improvement or transformation. For still others a few some arrangements suffice.

The concrete study of the different items classified according to corresponding needs will show us what, among the Sarakatsani are the various forms of intervention in question.

342 The Dwelling and the Buildings Intended for the Animals.

The huts described serve, as we have seen, primarily for dwelling. The arrangements made to this end are the following:

352
353 The small wall which protects the interior from rainwater also serves as a shelf /piece of furniture of support/. Household articles and especially blankets and rugs belonging to the family are placed upon it (fig. 62).^A Piled one on top of another all around the hut and (513) covered by those which are considered the most beautiful in design or color, the blankets are always at the disposal of the occupants and thus become part of the decor of the hut.

The "beds," also described above, which line the wall and finish it off are used chiefly to hold sacks, cooking pots, etc. (fig. 63).

354 The fire is always burning in the hut. It is where the family prepare their meals and gather round to eat, warm themselves and sleep.

The smoke escapes to the outside through the boughs and leaves of the roof (fig. 76). It is true that when the fire is kindled the smoke rises and accumulates under the roof before being emitted, so that in practice one does not feel it below a height of 1.50 meters from the ground. And the Sarakatsani say that, on principle, "everybody must be
^A, [Fig. 62 appears on p.91--Analyst]

/96 cont./

354 seated during the kindling." Once the wood has taken hold, smoke accumulation is no longer to be feared, for the heated air rises and escapes slowly to the outside through the roof boughs.

342 /97/ Each hut is a single unit which is used at one and the same
182 time as sleeping quarters, dining room, kitchen, finally as workroom
592 for small tasks. Thus, the entire family life unfolds communally in the presence of all.

513 In the evening everybody, men, women, children, newly married couples, etc., lie down on the ground all around the hearth, their



Fig. 76

513 heads toward the periphery of the hut. The floor is covered with rugs
[352] and outspread blankets. Moreover, no one undresses for sleeping. The rugs always remain spread out on the ground which is almost completely covered by them and is practically not visible.

352 At the left of the entrance there are two shelves on which utensils
353 and dishes can be set. (fig. 65). A

On the right side of the entrance a place is reserved for sacks containing food provisions (grains, flour, etc.), as well as a small tub full of water.

A, [Fig. 65 appears on p.93--Analyst]

/97 cont./

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353

The cradle is customarily placed at the back of the hut to the left.

On the interior walls of the hut and near the entrance are fastened short forks of wood upon which hung clothes, bags, etc. are hung.

(343)

The small huts are often used as outbuildings (as storehouses, /98/ for instance). They are then provided with "beds" to hold blankets and food provisions in reserve.

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Others are used as shelters for the shepherds who do not go far away from the flocks. During the cold nights of winter a fire is lighted there, directly on the earth and beside the entrance.

343
352

With respect to the "fretzato" abutting the hut, as well as for the "photogoni" that serves as outdoor kitchen, there is nothing to add, except that the former, which is fitted out with "beds," also serves as storehouses.

343
(574)

The "tsardhaki," free-standing or integrated into a fretzato, functions as reception room for visitors. Moreover, the members of the family sit and even lie down there, comfortably sheltered from the sun during the summer.

(574)

Generally speaking, it is the kitchen, the supplies and the space intended for the reception of visitors which "move outdoors," following a general practice widespread throughout several parts of the world. (22)

22. See A. Lerol-Gourhan: Milieu et Technique, p. 286.

The animal shelters protect the flocks from bad weather and from wolves.

Clothing--Blankets--Rugs.

121

The study of clothing, blankets and rugs shows us, on the one hand, how the Sarakatsani succeed in meeting the needs corresponding to these objects; on the other hand, it introduces us to their aesthetics.

(128)

Inasmuch as we intend to devote a chapter of the present work to

/140 cont./

585 The wife is solemnly presented "to the city and the world,"
602 surrounded and chaperoned by her new lineage, in such a way that
848 everybody knows that she belongs to this lineage and that her
562 descendants are now and henceforward known by it as legitimate.
613

585 /141/ However, since certain points here may still be obscure,
602 let us continue our analysis:

[591] Secondly, the young couple, as we have also seen, settles down in
the hut where the paternal family of the husband lives. In view of
[342] the fact that Sarakatsani huts are not partitioned and that everybody
sleeps on the floor around the hearth, it is easy to understand that
the wedding night is spent--in the midst of the family!

585 In order to justify this practice, the Sarakatsani say that "the
833 sexual act between the spouses should be carried out in the bosom of the
602 family." Moreover, the same holds true for all the couples in the
family.

The Sarakatsani reply to the astonished investigator "that the
newly married couple do not wear bells" that therefore this act occurs
unperceived by the others...However, that is the anecdotal aspect of the
matter.

597 To suppress the barriers of modesty, above all within the framework
834 of this society where morals are very strict, where bold allusions,
831 especially in front of women, are forbidden, (21)

21. We ourselves were present at the following scene:

[513] One evening, the old head of the family, warmed by wine,
started to tell a bawdy story. Whereupon his sons,
despite the respect they owed him, protested to such an
extent that the old man fell silent.

where one never even speaks of the sexual life (the account of magic
rites in connection with fertility will furnish an illustration of this),
is not a simple and easy act.

/158 cont./

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474
602 Such devotion, such self-sacrifice can scarcely develop within the framework of a contractual bond, no matter of what kind. Something more is required. Only a blood tie, and thus kinship, is alone capable of attaching to bonds of economic cooperation the basis and the moral and emotional content which will transform them into truly social and human ties, into a true and supreme solidarity.

It is for this reason that the Sarakatsani have adopted the form of the extended family as the basis of their socio-economic organization.

Thus we see that the principal determinants at the basis of this process are of two orders: economic (efficiency in herding and the associated business) and social (security through solidarity). The remaining determinants involved will become apparent in the course of our exposition.

The Life Style of the Extended Family and its Social Functions.

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128 If we have grouped these two subjects under one heading it is because the way to grasp the social functions of the extended family is through the study of their way of life. We shall thus proceed from the latter to arrive at the former.

596 Made up of conjugal families and non-married individuals, the extended family determines the life of its components and dominates them on all, or nearly all, levels.

First, its members live together. (34) However, if their number is

34. The model of this type of living-together already existed in Greece in Homeric times: Iliad VI, 244: "The Palace of Priam sheltered a large number of his married sons and sons-in-law." Odyssey III, 387: "Nesor had his bachelor sons sleep in his room, and installed in his palace his married sons, etc."

too large, they live in adjacent huts, each hut being occupied by a conjugal family or a small /159/ lineage, without disrupting mutual contacts which always remain intimate and unbroken.

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/159 cont./

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[322]

as is the manufacture /160/ of the objects themselves. The Sarakatsani youth specializes from childhood on in wood craft, and is proud of his competence and his skill. Likewise, the work that involves the decoration of these objects is always done by the men. The women never participate, even when it is a matter of distaff or a spindle.

[342]

Since certain phases of the construction of huts demand a physical strength that the women do not have (the erection of the framework of the round hut, for example), the men take charge of this work. But here their participation ends. All the Sarakatsani buildings are the work of the women.

[234]
[439]

As far as milk products are concerned, the men take care of this work only in very rare cases where the Sarakatsani market these products themselves. All the cheese and butter meant for family consumption is prepared by the women.

[252]
[233]

The shepherds straying far from camp, as they do during the summer, prepare their own bread and cook their food. Here necessity prevails over custom according to which women take charge of the preparation of meals.

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However, there is also another division of tasks, based on technical criteria this time. It concerns, to begin with, the work of shepherds.

Each concerns himself with a certain category of livestock, according to his own capabilities. Thus one may distinguish shepherds who are in charge respectively:

- of lambs up to the age of one year,
- of ewes from that age on up,
- of ewes that are pregnant, as well as of milch ewes,
- of sterile ewes,
- finally, of rams.

The most experienced shepherds take care of milch ewes and those that are pregnant. Then come the shepherds who are in charge of the lambs and the little ewes. The other categories do not require special abilities.

/179 cont./

474 He is seldom personally involved in herding, and carries a staff much
59 shorter than that of the other shepherds, a staff /180/ which is also
293 a sign of his rank. Moreover, he is the only one who has a saddle
492 horse.

291 His dress is more elaborate than that of his men and his hut is
342 always situated in the center of the encampment and built on the
361 highest point.

417 Generally, his hut has a fretzato (circular enclosure adjoining the
351 hut and forming a court) in which he receives visitors and where the
594 negotiations with merchants take place.

431 It is he who offers hospitality, not forgetting, however, to write
574 down the expenditures as part of the general cost of the business.

Nothing happens in the Tséligato that he is not advised of. However, his authority never gives him the right to interfere in questions concerning the private lives of the participants.

In the course of performing his functions, the Tséligas may, if he wishes, consult the other men of the Tséligato. Yet this almost never happens. There is only one situation in which he needs the opinion of the experienced shepherds; he inquires of them about the quality of the grass of different pastures meant for the various categories of livestock.

We see by this that the only case in which the opinion of the subjects of the Tséligas might be expressed is in an essentially technical, and not in an administrative matter.

This exception is very characteristic of the status and prestige of the Tséligas who must, above all, act with justice, objectivity, generosity, and prudence. Respected by all, he insures order and peace.

673 If one or another of the participants shows himself to be undesirable the Tséligas can turn him out before the expiration of his contract, but after the mutual obligations have been settled.

436 /192 cont./

437 participants their share of the profits of the cooperative. On the
438 other hand, money becomes very important at the time of dealings with
439 the outside (purchases, renting of pastures, etc.).

439 Although, in daily life, the Sarakatsani does not need money, the
440 Tseligas is obliged to have funds at his disposal permanently in order to
441 handle the financial requirements of business and likewise to provide
442 funds to his subjects if necessary.

443 In the fifth place, it must be emphasized that the Sarakatsani
444 economy is cooperative economy in the sense that it tends toward the
suppression of individualism and competition. The underlying assumptions
and arrangements are distinctly unfavorable to the latter. There is, first
of all, the organization of work on the basis of group membership, for
if each of the fellow-workers tried to follow his own way, cooperation
would vanish forthwith. Then there is the complete lack of special socio-
(571) professional groups--virtual hotbeds of antagonism and competition.

(421) Central management in the hands of one individual initiative. There is a
strong organization and a system of joint ownership.

438 Finally--and this is the sixth and last principle of Sarakatsani
439 economy, very revealing of their way of life--all the activities
440 connected with "acquisition" properly speaking are carried out by the men
441 only. On the other hand, in all cases having to do with "consumption"
442 the activity is confined to the women.

442 Nevertheless, appearances sometimes seem to contradict this rule.
443 The women engage in gathering, the raising of goats and occasionally poultry;
562 they are also in charge of building. However, neither gathering nor the
raising of poultry play an important role in Sarakatsani economy. In the
tending of goats, women's competence is confined to milking and shearing.
The most important aspect of the work, pasturing, is reserved for the men.

442 Finally, the building of huts and sheepfolds does not represent a pro-
443 ductive activity in the same sense as the others. By its nature it comes
444

/192 cont./

462 closer to consumption than production. Moreover, the very method of
342 construction, the interlacing of branches and flexible material, is
433 almost the same as that of weaving. It is in any case more nearly
562 related. The specialization of the women in the latter /193/ is a
consequence of their skill in the former. The principle involved is
therefore uniformly applied.

462 That is not all. All the activities and techniques entrusted
562 to the women presuppose activity on the part of the men. For they are
433 the ones who furnish the raw materials and manufacture the necessary
tools and utensils--wool, cotton, dyes, loom, carding machine, or
even flour, oil, cooking pots, knives, etc. The techno-economic com-
petence of the women constitutes a sort of second stage in the techno-
economic process in general, in which the group of men retain the
initiative and control.

462 Sarakatsani society decrees that, in this domain as in so many
562 others, the man, must keep for himself the role of absolute master.

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CHAPTER III

LAW IN SARAKATSANI SOCIETY

GENERAL ASPECTS

671 The legal system of the Sarakatsani is dominated by a dualism.
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This statement means that this society uses two bodies of rules of
a legal order.

The one, which is its own work, is Sarakatsani law strictly speaking.

The other comes from the Hellenic society that surrounds them. Since,
as we have seen, our herders are not merely Sarakatsani, but also Greek,
it is natural that Hellenic law also concerns them.

This dualism basically reflects the relations of a sociological order
that exist between Sarakatsani society and non-Sarakatsani society, both
included in the total society of the Hellenic Nation.

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777 Tuesday--a day considered unlucky. Marital relations likewise, are forbidden on Saturday /255/ and Sunday. (21) Children conceived on

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21. It is very difficult to explain these prohibitions.

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According to a belief very widespread in Greece, Tuesday is an unlucky day because Constantinople fell into the hands of the Turks on a Tuesday. Yet it is certain that it was already considered unlucky before the fall of the Empire.

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vol. I, p. 42.--As for Saturday, it should be said that in many regions of Greece it is considered the day most favorable for magic. In others the prohibition of sexual relations is due to the fact that Saturday and Sunday are days meant for religious duties, and therefore he should refrain from unchastity.

these days are supposed to be burdened with defects. On the other hand, those who are conceived on a Monday are gifted with health and exceptional intelligence.

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When a child is conceived, the mother-to-be must protect herself against a miscarriage. To this end two methods are prescribed. The first consists of making an amulet: flowers of the willow are placed in a small bag which the woman wears. The second is more complicated: three women, all called "Mary" (the name of the Holy Virgin, mother of God) make a rope composed of three strands of wool previously fashioned by each of them. Having finished the rope, they make several knots in it and place it around the waist of the mother-to-be. (22)

22. Cited by Madame Hadjimichali: Ibid., A.I. p.

The symbolic efficacy of these methods is in the use of the willow and the rope as "bonds," (23) therefore also capable of binding together the mother

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23. It will be recalled that the parts of the hut frame are tied with willow. On the magic of the

"knots" see M. Eliade: Images et Symboles, p. 145.

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789 influences that ceaselessly threaten the well-being of men and, jealous,
585 take advantage of moments of happiness to attack them. The smacks
[776] transform what seems to be a festival into a brawl. (68)

68. This practice is a result of the anthropomorphic
form that the Sarakatsani give certain bad spirits.

789 That is why, in the course of the feast that follows the celebration of
784 the wedding, the Sarakatsani put on a dance performed by the men alone.
535 Two young men, suitably disguised, here represent the married couple. At
585 a given moment they withdraw from the dance and, in front of everybody,
simulate the sexual act, so that /274/ the evil spirits, deceived,
descend on them - with no harmful consequences - and spare the couple.

789 However, curative procedures, as such, are not lacking. It is very
825 advisable, for example, always to have on oneself something derived from
[237] wild animals (skin of the hare, hairs of the wild boar, feathers of the
partridge, etc.). These animals that feed on all the plants and shrubs
of the field and forest transmit to men their admirable properties
(strength, resistance, speed, etc.) as well as the medicinal qualities of
their food. (69)

69. Van der Leeuw: Ibid., p. 66: "The superiority of the
animal is quite evident. The animal has a power that is
lacking in man: muscular force, sharpness of vision,
keenness of smell, a sense of orientation..."

That is why honey is considered the best medicine because the bees gather
honey from all the flowering plants. When the building of a new hut is
finished, one does not move in before having lighted a fire in the hearth.

342 789 And if possible a priest is called to celebrate the office of the holy
372 water. These two procedures tend to assure the well-being of the family. (70)

70. In both cases one seeks to keep off evil influences.

That fire has warding-off properties against all evils that
try to enter a new dwelling before people do is a very

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widespread belief. See: A. Métraux: Contribution au Folklore Andin, p. 87.--P. Deffontaines: Géographie et Religion, p. 30 (Madagascar), etc.

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The Sarakatsani women put nettle leaves on their clothing in order to protect their skin from irritation caused by clothing and perspiration, especially during the long marches of the seasonal migrations. It is a practice based on the idea that, since the irritation caused by the nettle and the sweat seem the same, the same cause is found in their origin. When one wears the cause on oneself, it will not work against one, for it is as if the cause worked against itself. (71)

71. It is the same idea that justifies the wearing of the weight from the fairies' spindle in order to protect oneself against their evil spells.

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The Sarakatsani treat chapped hands and lips with the blood of a lamb killed during the festival of Saint George, the protector of the Sarakatsani. The blood of the lamb offered as a sacrifice has curative properties. (72)
72. As we shall see in connection with religion.

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The technique of the transfer of an evil, which we were able to observe in the protection against Daoutis, is also applied in connection with /275/ throat ailments. While pronouncing "religious words" (according to the common expression), the secret of which is, as usual, jealously guarded, the healer draws a sign of the cross on the throat and makes a gesture of transferring the evil onto the arm of the patient where a sort of vesicular pustule is formed, the treatment of which is very easy and less annoying than that of the throat.

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The protection of the livestock against evil influences includes many practices. We have spoken of the half-charred log and the head of the viper which are carried into the strougha. In addition to promoting fertility, they are charged with a protective role, the first as representative of the healing fire and the second owing to the inherent qualities of the snake. There are other methods which we must bring to light.

Sara Katsani
EH14
Vlachs EH15

G 106

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563 differ linguistically. Part of the lure of this Epirus trip was learning more about these people and their way of life.

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[342] I had already seen their rounded branch and reed huts, surrounded by
[361] wattle sheepfolds, put up either in some isolated, sheltered spot or at the
[162] edge of some village I was visiting. Although in Greece they do not number
[291] more than ten to twelve thousand families, they stand out picturesquely
wherever they are. The men are dressed in tight-fitting black felt trousers
and a black waistcoat and usually carry a black hip-length cape slung over
their shoulder. They wear a round brimless lambskin cap (*kalpaki*). Many
of the nomad women, in contrast to most of the Greek peasant women who
now wear variations of Western dress, still keep to their heavy pleated
homespun skirts, thick wool stockings, and wide leather belt.

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[101] Even such generalizations on dwelling and clothing are dangerous, for
[197] there are different nomadic groups. From many conversations with the
[191] nomads themselves as well as with others familiar with them, I was able to
[291] draw up tentative distinctions. On the basis of language, one can easily di-
vide them into three groups. There are Koutso-Vlachs (the *Lime* Vlachs)
who speak a Latin tongue in the home, although most of them, particularly
the men, know Greek; the Arvanito-Vlachs (also called Karagouni because
of the black cape they wear) who speak Albanian among themselves, al-
though they still understand the Latin language of the Koutso-Vlachs from
whom they derive; and the Sarakatsani, said not to be Vlach at all, who
speak Greek as their only language. Many informants told me that the
Sarakatsani were among the "purest Greeks" because they had practiced
endogamy.

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[101] Another way of dividing the nomads is on the basis of type of settlement.
[361] The Karagouni and the Sarakatsani are called Skenites (literally, "tent
[342] dwellers"), for they do not usually have permanent homes either at their
summer or their winter encampment. They build their reed huts anew each
year or patch up those that remain usable from the previous year. The
Koutso-Vlachs as well as the Greek peasants who practice transhumance
(like those of Valtetsi) usually have a permanent village which they call
home. In some interviews I found that the Koutso-Vlachs considered their
winter home as the permanent settlement and the summer pastures the en-
campment; but most evidence seemed to indicate the reverse to be true.

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[174] The origin of these Koutso-Vlachs is one of the great ethnic puzzles of
[197] the Balkans, for their Latin tongue, although greatly corrupted by words
[101] from other Balkan languages, follows the four conjugations of ancient Latin.
[175] As in most riddles of this sort, nationalistic interests have led to several
extravagant claims. Some of the modern Rumanians, chiefly in the old
provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia, looked to the south across Bulgaria
and what is now Yugoslavia to claim these Romance-language shepherds
as long lost brothers to be reunited with the "homeland." They advanced

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Sarakatsani EH14*The Changing Life of the Shepherd*

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health. A third effect is that agriculture is almost impossible and is in consequence despised. Finally, home comforts must be portable. That is why an abundance of rugs, blankets, carpets, and cushions seen in these migrations is a sign of wealth.

But what of the Sarakatsani, the Greek-speaking group? ¹⁰ Already on a recent drive between Thebes, Lamia, and Volos, cities in Boeotia and Thessaly, I had looked down from the winding mountain roads into their small winter settlements of conical reed huts and circular reed sheepfolds. As we had passed we found the men and boys with their flocks not far from the road. We stopped to pass the time of day.

"How is the pasture this year?"

"Not very good" was the cautious reply.

"Are you Koutso-Vlachs or Sarakatsani?"

"We are Sarakatsani, but we also are Greeks."

Nearer Volos we found that the Sarakatsani, who originally had their huts just on the outskirts of the village, had settled down, building permanent homes. It was a striking contrast to see the reed hut a few feet away from the square mud-brick and mud-plaster house and to know that in case the family got too large some of the members would retire to the old hut and get along very well.

It was in Kalpaki, however, a settlement beyond Ioannina toward the Albanian border, at the edge of the Iron Curtain, that we enjoyed true Sarakatsani hospitality. Actually a Greek peasant village, its members had been increased by the forty Sarakatsani families settling there since the war, primarily to take advantage of the land left untilled by people moving away from disturbed frontier conditions. These forty families really had another village, Kato-Pethini, one-and-a-half-hours walking distance farther up the mountains, where they had their stone houses — something exceptional for those supposed to be Skenites (tent dwellers). Since they were working the fields around Kalpaki, it was here they now lived all the year around, apparently content with their reed houses, most of which followed a rectangular pattern rather than the more common circular shape. The women handled most of the agricultural tasks, but the men went back to the old Kato-Pethini with the flocks and returned to Kalpaki every ten or fifteen days for a change of clothing and a bath. Konstantin, a twenty-two-year-old youth whom we found grazing his sheep around the edges of the cultivated Kalpaki fields, had come down below with his flock for that purpose.

He invited us into the hut to meet his mother and sisters. We first entered the anteroom of the simple reed structure, from which chickens flew out as we came in. There we saw the woolly puppies that would grow up to be the menacing sheep dogs so necessary for the shepherd when alone with his flock. There also was the inevitable water barrel and near the cooking hearth the *ghasira*, the dome-shaped cover that is like a dutch oven. We

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- 35 saw the framework of poles, supporting the walls and roof of reeds, black-
 • [342] ened from the smoke since there was neither chimney nor smoke hole in the roof.

The partition separating the entrance room from the main room was
 [422] smoothed with clay stucco over the reeds. The total movable earthly pos-
 [583] sessions of these people were either in these two small rooms or in the form
 of the sheep pasturing outside. We noted the mattresses on the pounded
 earth floor, a pile of dowry blankets in one corner, another hearth, a small
 kerosene lamp hanging on a post over the single bed, two windows about a
 [273] foot square covered with chicken wire, a hanging shelf from which Konstan-
 tin's gentle twenty-year-old sister got a sweet liqueur (*mastica*), *loukoumi*
 (Turkish delight), and ouzo to serve to us. The flour was kept in a sack in
 592 a corner. The family living in this hut consisted of the widowed mother,
 two unmarried daughters, and two unmarried sons. There were three more
 married daughters, who were of course no longer in their parental home.

842 "The poorer the family, the more children you find; the richer the family,
 the fewer the children," said the mother. In an aside to me, Konstantin
 added, "For producing children is the only recreation of the poor." "But
 I understood," I said, "that shepherd families like to have lots of children to
 help with their flocks." Western influence was already making itself felt,
 152 for the mother said, "No, every child is just another mouth to feed." The
 look of fatigue on the faces of these people — the look of age on the pale
 [481] twenty-year-old — showed that they had gone through more than their
 [648] share of unrest and tribulation. Even their bodily movements, slower and
 listless compared to, say, the Valtetsi shepherds', reflected the strain of
 being in a border or frontier area where part of the enemy strategy seems
 to be to make the inhabitants feel so insecure that they will abandon their
 fields, just as the previous owners had done.

342 But these worn and weary frontier Sarakatsani have a saving sense of
 humor. When I was asking about the differences in the shapes of the huts
 522 used as dwellings and those used for animals, one of the unmarried daugh-
 ters who was serving us refreshments said with a smile of pure fun lighting
 up her pallid face, "Oh, we only use different kinds of tile to distinguish
 where we live and where the animals live." Everybody laughed at this ri-
 diculous reference to nonexistent tile roofs.

462 Here again I tried to learn how the Sarakatsani viewed themselves in
 [582] relationship to the other nomadic groups. They assured us that they never
 [186] married with the Karagouni or the Albanian-speaking Greek Vlachs. "Why
 not?" we asked. "Isn't the work of their women the same as yours?" "Most
 definitely not," affirmed the mother. "The Karagouni women don't know
 anything except pasturing the sheep and twisting their spindle. But we Sara-
 katsani women can work on the loom, work in the fields, and also if neces-
 sary care for the flocks."

I. VARIOUS FORMS OF THE GREEK POPULAR HOUSE

A. THE MODERN GREEK HOUSE

First, we must note that in Greece, in ancient times as well as to-day, we see both basic forms of dwelling, namely both curved and rectangular. As regards the first form (round, elliptical, horse-shoe), this is limited to the most primary forms of life, that is to the nomadic or semi-nomadic shepherd populations (Sarakatsanoi, Vlachoï) and sporadically to the poorest class of the farmers living in the Thessalian and other plain districts, who have kept, by tradition, the elementary and primitive methods of construction and roofing of the conical and saddle-type huts, and especially the use of organic materials such as wood, branches, weeds and reeds, which are easily provided by the marshes and the forests of these areas⁽¹⁾. As regards the rectangular houses, these are now more prevalent, as they were even in prehistoric Greece. The reasons for this may be that the rectangular buildings can be easily added to and divided into regular compartments⁽²⁾. That is why we shall mainly speak about the rectangular houses.

Greece, from a geographical as well as from a housing point of view, finds herself on the boundary between the northern temperate zone and the desert zone, which includes Northern Africa and Front Asia with Asia Minor and Iran. Consequently, continental Greece belongs to the countries of houses with sloping or eagle type roofs, and insular Greece together with Cyprus (excluding the Ionian Islands and the Islands of the Northern Aegean) to the countries of houses with flat roofs.

The explanation of this may lie in the fact that the flat roof may have originated from the simple flat shelter-roof which is essential

1) G. Megas, *Θεσπυλιανὴ οἰκίσις*, Athens 1946 pp. 11-16. For further details on primitive types of dwelling see also Franz Glmann, *Haus und Hof im Altertum*, I Berlin 1926 pp. 45 foll.

2) See Fr. Glmann, op. cit. pp. 39 and foll., 41.

B. THE ANCIENT GREEK HOUSE

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I will not mention the curved buildings of the prehistoric era, namely the circular, elliptical, horse-shoe and arched forms, although they represent a primitive type of human dwelling, seen in Greece from very ancient times, and although we could greatly increase our knowledge through the study of the construction of the thatched or branched conical and saddle-shaped huts, used with us even to-day, by the Sarakatsanes, the Vlachoï and the Karagounides of Thessaly. For instance, the elliptical hut at Kaminades, Karditsa(?), which is not entirely curved, but has straight lines to connect the two arches and forms thus a rectangular and curved construction, teaches us how, through the influence of the rectangular shapes the arched forms were created as it is shown in the egg-shaped house at Rini in Thessaly (beginning of bronze age) and also what the type of covering in this mixed type of house would have been(?).

Consequently, I shall confine myself to the examination of the straight lined, and especially the rectangular, houses, since these to-day, as in the prehistoric times in Greece, constitute the most prevailing form of building.

The type of house, known as the megaron, can already be found in the neolithic age in Thessaly, in its main elements, namely the external shape and the internal arrangement of space. It is a rectangularly shaped dwelling, divided in depth, having its entrance on the narrow side and consisting of an ante-room (προδωμος) with two posts or columns between the two antae (or even without the columns), and of two rooms, one of them larger with a hearth in the middle, and the other smaller (Plate X, 1. 2).

In the most elementary form, this building form is bipartite consisting of one room and one ante-room, and it is found under this elementary form in the palaces of the Mycenaean and Homeric ages, as at Phylakopi in Melos, at pre-mycenaean Troy II and at Tiryns, where, as at Mycenae, there is another room between the ante-room and the main room (Plate X, 3-5). This simplest form

Architecture. Cambr. 1929, 2 edit. 1933. Carl Welckert, Typen der archaischen Architektur in Griechenland u. Kleinasien 1929. G. P. Olkonomos, 'Ο ἱεὺς Ἀργείου Ἡραίου πύλου οἰκίσκος, Contribution to the History of Architecture in Archaeol. Ephemeris, 1931.

1) G. Megas Θεσσαλ. Οἰκίσκος, p. 11, Fig. 3.

2) B. Rider, The Greek House, p. 64 Fig. 8; G. P. Olkonomos, op. cit. pp. 20 foll. Cf. G. Mylonas, 'Η νεολιθική κατοικία ἐν Ἑλλάδι. Athens 1928.